



State of Tennessee Department of Children's Services

**Administrative Policies and Procedures: 26.3-DOE**

---

**Subject: Telephone Privileges**

supersedes: DYD 15.3

**Approved by:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "George M. Hattaway".

**Effective date:** 07/01/1990

**Authority:**

TCA 37-5-106

**ACA Standard:**

2-9279, 2-9280,  
2-9330

- I. APPLICATION: To all Youth Development Center staff and youth.
- II. POLICY: Each youth confined to a Youth Development Center shall be permitted to make at least two collect or local telephone calls per month to his/her immediate family or other approved person(s). Provisions shall also be made for youth to make emergency calls and calls to their attorneys. Telephone privileges shall not be restricted except through the criteria and procedures outlined below.
- III. PROCEDURES:
  - A. Guidelines and rules concerning the use of telephones shall be included in the youth handbook. Such guidelines and rules shall include the location of the telephones available for youth use, times when telephones may be used, maximum length of calls permitted, to whom calls may be made, and circumstances under which youth may receive calls. No time limits shall be placed on calls to attorneys or other legal assistance representatives.
  - B. Regularly scheduled calls to members of the immediate family should take place between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. daily unless the family's normal schedule indicates otherwise.
  - C. Youth shall be permitted to make up to five telephone calls per month unless reduced as a disciplinary sanction. In no case shall a youth be permitted less than two telephone calls per month, excluding those outlines in Section III (E and F).
  - D. The youth's treatment team may determine to whom a youth may make telephone calls other than calls to the immediate family, guardian, or attorney. If treatment reasons exist, the youth's treatment team shall have the discretion to

limit or restrict calls to any immediate family member. Such action and the reason(s) therefore shall be recorded in the youth's Individual Program Plan (IPP) by the team leader and reviewed by the Youth Service Manager of Treatment.

- E. In addition to regularly scheduled calls, youth shall be allowed to make calls at state expense to their attorneys during normal work days and hours. The youth shall not be allowed to regularly interrupt his/her academic and/or vocational training in order to make telephone calls unless they are otherwise unable to contact their attorney after school hours.
- F. Youth shall be allowed to make emergency telephone calls in addition to regularly scheduled calls at the discretion of the Superintendent, if a family or youth crisis arises.
- G. In the event of the family financial hardship, youth shall be allowed to make two telephone calls per month at state expense. The Superintendent, or designee, shall identify hardship cases, after verification by the Probation Officer. If the youth's immediate family does not have a telephone, a third party may be designated to receive phone calls from the youth. The third party may be a neighbor, close family friend, or member of the youth's extended family. These calls shall not exceed five minutes in length.
- H. Any staff member witnessing or having creditable knowledge of a youth's abuse of telephone privileges shall report such abuse to the youth's team leader. If the staff member actually witnesses the abuse, they shall cause the abusive action to stop. He/she may issue the youth a Minor Behavioral Incident Report. For repeated abuse of the telephone privileges, a youth's telephone privileges, except for those telephone calls provided for in Section III (D and E) above, may be reduced to not less than two telephone calls for a period of up to one month if the allegations are substantiated in a disciplinary hearing. Abuse shall include:
  - 1. Use of threatening or obscene language during telephone calls;
  - 2. Charging telephone calls without proper authorization to do so;
  - 3. Making telephone calls to an unauthorized person;
  - 4. Violation of schedule and duration rules.
- I. Youth calls shall not be monitored or listened to except to determine, when the call is initiated, that the youth is not calling an unauthorized person.
- J. It shall be the responsibility of the treatment team leader to document in the youth's file, on a monthly basis, that the youth was offered the opportunity to make at least two telephone calls during the month, excluding telephone calls delineated in Section III (E and F).

IV. FORMS: None

**(Note: This Policy Cannot Be Revised Without Prior Permission  
of Chancery Court, Davidson County, Nashville, Tennessee.)**